
AP[®] Psychology

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

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Free-Response Question 1

- ☒ **Scoring Guidelines**
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Question 1: Concept Application**7 points****General Considerations**

1. Answers must be cogent enough for the meaning to come through. Spelling and grammatical mistakes do not reduce a score, but spelling must be close enough so that the reader is convinced of the word.
2. A response can earn points only if the student clearly conveys what part of the question is being answered. It is possible to infer the part of the question being answered if it is consistent with the order of the question.
3. The response must apply the concept to the prompt. A definition alone will not earn the point, but a clear definition can support the application.
4. Examples provided in the Scoring Guidelines for each of the points are not to be considered exhaustive.
5. Within a point, a response will not be penalized for incorrect information unless it *directly contradicts* correct information that would have otherwise earned a point. For example, if a response applies a concept in two contradictory ways (such as identifying both the independent and dependent variables as the independent variable or describing proactive interference as interference from both older and newer information), the point is not earned.

NOTE: In certain cases, a response will not score if it includes a correct answer amongst multiple incorrect answers related to the same general concept/theory (e.g., a response that describes the Big Five trait of conscientiousness as being diligent, trusting, highly emotional, outgoing, and intellectually curious).

6. Within a bulleted question part, if the response addresses details from a scenario other than the one in the prompt, the point is not earned.

Part A Gavin's parents took him to his favorite science museum, and he explored all of the exhibits. One of the interactive exhibits featured glass marbles. He grabbed a large marble and tried to bounce it on the ground. At one point during the visit, he became separated from his parents, and it took a few minutes for them to find him. Later that night, he drew a colorful picture of the exhibits at the museum. The next day, Gavin brought his picture with him to preschool. While his grandmother drove, Gavin talked to her about the picture.

Explain how Jean Piaget's concept of assimilation could relate to Gavin's experience with the glass marble.

1 point

Response must indicate that Gavin attempts to treat the glass marbles like "balls" by trying to bounce them on the ground.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin thought the marble would bounce like all other balls.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

Responses that refer to schema accommodation.

- *Gavin now has a schema for "glass marbles" and knows they don't bounce like "balls."*
- *Gavin thought the marbles were like bouncy balls, so he tried to bounce them. Then he changed his schema when he learned that glass marbles are different and cannot be bounced.*

Explain how egocentrism could relate to how Gavin interacted with his grandmother in the car. **1 point**

Response must indicate that Gavin only considers his own perspective or assumes that others know what he knows when interacting with his grandmother.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin holds up the picture in a way where he is the only one who can see it, but he thinks his grandmother can see it.*
- *Gavin talks about the museum trip from his perspective and doesn't recognize his grandmother is busy driving.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

The response refers to Gavin being selfish.

- *Gavin does not care what his grandma thinks because all he cares about is the picture he drew.*

The response refers to Gavin telling his grandmother about the experience without referencing a lack of perspective.

- *Gavin tells his grandmother all about the trip to the museum.*
-

Explain how avoidant attachment could relate to Gavin when he was separated from his parents. **1 point**

Response must indicate a lack of distress when separated from his parents.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin didn't get upset or cry when he was separated from his parents.*
- *When separated from his parents, Gavin spent the time playing by himself at different exhibits.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin was very fearful and anxious when his parents left him.*
-

Part B Explain how each of the following terms could relate to Gavin in this scenario.

Serial position effect **1 point**

Response must indicate that Gavin recalls information from the beginning or ending of his experience better than information that is in the middle of his experience at the museum.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin remembered the exhibits he visited at the beginning of the day better.*
- *Gavin remembered the exhibits he visited at the end of the day better.*
- *Gavin had trouble remembering which exhibits he visited in the middle of the day.*
- *Gavin remembered the exhibits he visited at the beginning and end of the day better than the ones in the middle of the day.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

Responses that refer to primacy or recency effects without reference to better recall.

- *Gavin remembered the exhibits he visited at the beginning of the day.*
-

Motor cortex**1 point**

Response must indicate that Gavin's motor cortex controls his movements.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin uses more of his motor cortex to use his fingers to draw the picture.*
- *Gavin uses his motor cortex to grab the marble.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin moves a lot when he plays.*

Cognitive map**1 point**

Response must indicate that Gavin formed a mental picture/layout/orientation/representation of the museum or another location related to the scenario.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin remembered where the entrance was to the museum because of his mental map.*
- *Gavin has created a mental picture of the museum to help him draw an accurate picture of the layout.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin creates a cognitive map that helps him navigate around the museum.*

Cones in the retina**1 point**

Response must indicate that Gavin's cones allow him to see color and/or detail (e.g., acuity, clarity, sharpness of vision).

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin is able to create his picture because the cones in his retina enable him to see color and detail.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

- *Gavin uses his cones to see well.*
- *Gavin can see movement out of the corner of his eye.*

Total for question 1 7 points

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Assimilation is when one takes in new information and incorporates it into their existing schema. Gavin sees the round marble and incorporates it into his existing schema of a ball because they are both round. Thus, he tries to bounce the marble and it doesn't bounce.

Egocentrism is when ~~one~~ one is unable to perceive things from another person's perspective. When speaking to his Grandmother about the picture, Gavin might ask what his grandmother liked about the picture without showing it to her. He believes that since he can see the picture, she must be able to.

Avoidant Attachment is when a child ^{isn't upset} ~~doesn't care~~ if their parents leave them and don't care when they return. & If Gavin wasn't upset that he was separated from his parents in the museum, he would have an avoidant attachment.

Serial Position Effect is when one remembers the first information they heard after a time and the last information shortly after hearing it. Gavin made ~~a picture~~ a picture of the exhibits

Page 2

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Question 1

Question 2



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at the museum. ~~Since~~ Since it was several hours after the museum, Gavin would remember the first exhibits he saw ~~more~~ better than the rest.

The motor cortex is responsible for movement. Gavin is able to color a picture and grab the marble because ~~the~~ his motor cortex allows him to move.

A cognitive map is a mental representation of one's ~~own~~ environment. Since the museum is ~~also~~ Gavin's favorite museum, he has been there several times and has therefore created a cognitive map of the museum. Thus, when separated from his parents, he is easily able to make his way around the museum to find them.

The cones in the retina allow a person to see color. Gavin is able to see all the different colors in the picture he drew because of the cones in the retina.

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Question 1

Question 2



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

- a) Assimilation is when previous knowledge ~~is changed~~ ~~is altered~~ is altered due to new stimuli being introduced. In this case, Gavin may have originally thought all round objects bounce, but after the marble didn't bounce, he was able to assimilate this new understanding of marbles into his knowledge.
- b) Egocentrism is the feeling of thinking the world revolves around you, and that others lack personal experiences if they do not involve you. Gavin was showing egocentrism because he completely disregarded what was happening in his grandma's life and continuously talked to her about himself; his trip to the science museum.
- c) Avoidant attachment style is an attachment style where a child does not feel sad when ~~so~~ parents leave the room, and do not necessarily overjoy when they are back either. When Gavin was separated from his parents, he likely did not face any distress, and was content on his own.
- d) Serial position effect is remembering the order of something when it is placed in a series. In this case, Gavin may have remembered the location of each exhibit better because ~~he~~ he may have seen a numbered map that

Page 2

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Question 1

Question 2



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listed all of them in order.

e) Motor cortex is the part of your brain that controls movement. Gavin's motor cortex is what allowed him to lift the marble and try to bounce it. It's also what allowed him to explore each science exhibit.

f) Cognitive map is a mental understanding of a location due to a repeated exposure of that place. In this case, Gavin had formed a cognitive map of the science museum, which is what allowed him to draw the colorful picture of the exhibits when he got home.

g) Cones in the retina are what are responsible for allowing you to see color. In this case, the cones in Gavin's retina allowed him to choose the colors he wanted to use in his drawing of the exhibits and be able to see those colors.

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Question 1

Question 2



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Jean Piaget's concept of assimilation could relate to Gavin's experience with the glass marbles. This is because since Gavin tried to bounce the glass marble, he could have gotten a glass marble mixed up with a bouncy ball. This would be using assimilation since both marbles and bouncy balls are both round.

Egocentrism could relate to how Gavin interacted with his grandma. This is because Gavin could have just been talking about himself the whole time, representing Egocentrism.

Avoidant attachment could relate to Gavin when he was separated from his parents. This is because Gavin was so interested in all the cool exhibits, he did not even realize his parents were missing, demonstrating Avoidant Attachment.

Serial position effect could relate to Gavin in this scenario. This is because the serial position effect is the point that he remembers the most. Assuming that was with the marbles, that is what he could've drawn on the paper.

Motor Cortex could relate to Gavin in this scenario. This is since Gavin's motor cortex is working and in use when grabbing the large marble off the ground and trying to bounce it.

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Question 1

Question 2



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Cognitive map could relate to this scenario. This is because as Gavin is walking ~~was~~ through this museum and exploring all the exhibits, he is creating a cognitive map of the museum. Therefore, if Gavin goes to visit this museum again, he will already have a cognitive map made, and will know his way around the museum.

The cones of the retina could relate to this scenario. This is because while he is drawing the picture of the exhibit from the museum, his cones are seeing the different colors he is using, making the picture colorful. This is since the ones of the retina see color.

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Question 1

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

Responses to this question were expected to demonstrate how specific psychological concepts applied to the scenario, which described the experience a young child had going to a science museum. The responses needed to demonstrate an understanding of Piaget's concept of assimilation, egocentrism, avoidant attachment, serial position effect, motor cortex, cognitive map, and cones in the retina.

Sample: 1A

Score: 7

The **assimilation point** scores because it indicates that Gavin applied an existing schema of a ball to the marble and tried to bounce it. The **egocentrism point** scores because it indicates that Gavin assumes that his grandmother has an opinion of his picture that she has not seen. The **avoidant attachment point** scores because it indicates that Gavin was not upset when separated from his parents. The **serial position effect point** scores because it indicates Gavin was able to recall the first events, for example, better than the rest. The **motor cortex point** scores because it indicates Gavin used his motor cortex to color and grab. The **cognitive map point** scores because it indicates that Gavin makes a mental representation of his environment, which he uses to find his parents. The **cones in the retina point** scores because it indicates that Gavin used cones to see color in his picture.

Sample: 1B

Score: 4

The **assimilation point** does not score because it refers to Gavin changing his existing knowledge based on his experience with marbles, which is a description of accommodation and not assimilation. The **egocentrism point** does not score because it does not describe Gavin's inability to take his grandmother's perspective. This response describes egocentrism as more about being self-involved instead of lacking the ability to take another's perspective. The **avoidant attachment point** scores because it indicates that Gavin did not experience distress when he was separated from his parents. The **serial position effect point** does not score because it does not indicate that Gavin's recall is better for items at the beginning or end of his experience than for those in the middle of his experience. The **motor cortex point** score because it refers to Gavin lifting the marble. The **cognitive map point** scores because it references Gavin's mental understanding of the museum. Gavin can reproduce the layout of the museum's exhibits based on his cognitive map. The **cones in the retina point** scores because it refers to the role of cones in seeing color.

Question 1 (continued)

Sample: 1C

Score: 3

The **assimilation point** scores because it refers to Gavin using the marble like a ball and trying to bounce it. The **egocentrism point** does not score because it does not indicate that Gavin considers only his own perspective when talking to his grandmother. This response describes egocentrism as more about being self-involved instead of lacking the ability to take another’s perspective. The **avoidant attachment point** does not score because it does not indicate that Gavin showed a lack of distress when he was away from his parents. The **serial position effect point** does not score because it does not indicate that Gavin remembered the beginning or end better than the middle of his experience at the museum. The **motor cortex point** scores because it refers to the motor cortex being involved in grabbing the marble. The **cognitive map point** does not score because it repeatedly parrots the term “cognitive map” without showing a clear understanding of the concept. The **cones in the retina point** scores because it refers to the cones allowing Gavin to see colors.